

The

Alcester Grammar



M.D.C.

NOBISCUM

CHRISTUS

STATE.

School Record

March, 1938.



SPORTS SHIELD

Photo by)

(Holte, Stratford-on-Avon.

Alcester Grammar School Record.

No. 59

MARCH, 1938

Editorial.

EDITOR—MR. V. V. DRULLER.

COMMITTEE—

D. HUNT, A. JENKINS, PARSONS, HUNT i.

We who are responsible for the appearance of this little magazine every term have been much gratified by the steady increase in its circulation during the last eighteen months. For several years our sales were somewhere between two hundred and fifty and two hundred and sixty-five copies per term. Then, during 1936, there was a noticeably increased demand, which has steadily mounted, until, last term, we had to give the printers a larger order, and topped the three hundred mark in our sales. Now this additional revenue is both making the work of production easier and at the same time enabling us to give subscribers a larger and more representative magazine. We try to return to our readers any small profit that may be made, in the form of more pages and illustrations. It will have been observed that the last two issues have contained twenty-eight or more pages, in contrast to the twenty or twenty-four of earlier issues, and this term we are once more able to aspire to twenty-eight pages. We wish, on behalf of the School, to express our gratitude to our readers for their support in the past and our hope that this support will be continued term by term.

* * * *

We would draw attention to our frontispiece. The two shields—for Sports and for Arts and Crafts—for which there has been year by year such strenuous competition between Brownies, Jackals and Tomtits were bound one day to become filled with the records of victories. So at last both were found to be full, and the need arose for new trophies to replace them. The school has been very fortunate in not having to wait long to obtain new shields. Through the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Collier—whose gift we acknowledged last July—the School was enabled to procure the handsome new Sports shield which we

During the supper interval the business meeting was held. The balance sheet for 1936—37 was presented and approved, a vote of thanks being accorded to B. Walker, the Guild's honorary auditor.

The subject of a Guild dinner, about which members had been earlier circularised, was raised and provoked a lengthy discussion. The general feeling was that the idea was sound, but that the price suggested was far too high. It was left to the committee to try to arrange a dinner at a lower figure.

The committee hope to present to the School the new shield in time for Sports Day this year, but a sum of about £5 is still required to pay for it. We feel sure that there are many Old Scholars keen to associate themselves with this project who have not yet subscribed. May we say once again that all subscriptions, large or small, will be gratefully received by the treasurer, at "Whitehall," Alcester.

The Old Scholars' New Year's Eve dance held in the Town Hall was a huge success, both socially and financially. A profit of £6 0s. 6d. was made. The Evesham Abbey Band provided the music for dancing.

Old Scholars will be happy to learn that F. Rook is now out of hospital, and will join with the committee in wishing him a speedy return to health.

Our heartiest congratulations to R. Bunting, who has been invited by the All-England Hockey Association to take part in the Australia and New Zealand tour by an English hockey team this year. Though she has felt herself unable to allow her name to go forward for selection, the invitation is a fine tribute to her skill as a goalkeeper.

If there are any Old Scholars who require the official Guild Blazer, will they communicate with the secretary who will give them full particulars. The price is 31s. 6d., inclusive of the pocket badge, and the blazers can be supplied within a fortnight from the receipt of order.

A hockey match with the School XI, played on Friday, March 4th, was drawn, no goals being scored. The Old Scholars were represented by E. Holder, E. Lewis, B. Clark, M. Clark, M. Cowper, L. Heath, C. Sherwood, M. Sisam, J. Collett, and two present scholars.

are here illustrating. Another shield, for Arts and Crafts, has been offered by the Old Scholars' Guild, to be presented to the School in time for Sports Day next term. We hope to be able to include a photograph of this in our next issue.

* * * *

The present term has been, like most Spring terms, the shortest of the school year. We are usually glad of this, as the end of winter most often affects our attendances through its epidemics of colds and influenza. This term, however, probably on account of less wintry conditions, attendances have been surprisingly good, and there has been very little interruption of work or play. How often are we able to reach the end of a Spring term without having to report interference with matches by either illness or bad weather?

The School Register.

Valete.

*Avery, A. W. (VI), 1932-37.
*Down, R. W. (VI), 1932-37.
Orme, H. G. (VI), 1933-37.

Taylor, W. M. (Low. V.), 1934-37.
Gaydon, A. H. (Rem.), 1934-37.

* Prefect.

Salvete.

Johnson, S. (i).
Timewell, H. M. (iii).

Trotman, K. M. (Low. IVb.).

The number of pupils in attendance this term has been 202.

Old Scholars' Guild News.

PRESIDENT—MR. C. T. L. CATON.

HON. SECRETARY—S. C. Styler. HON. TREASURER—L. G. Baylis.

A highly successful Winter Reunion was held at school on the evening of Saturday, December 18. The hall, the dining room, and other rooms were seasonably decorated with holly, palms, streamers and crackers, and quite a festive atmosphere was given to the occasion. The first half of the programme was devoted to games, dancing, and songs by Kathleen Smith. After supper, the Old Scholars were entertained by a short sketch produced by Dorothy Balmforth. Dancing to music supplied by the Alauna Band continued till midnight, when the gathering closed, as usual, with "Auld Lang Syne" and "God Save the King."

Birth.

On December 30th, to Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Milward (nee Winifred Lamb)—a daughter.

Marriages.

On December 27, at East Hendred, Eric Wilfrid Sherwood (scholar 1924-28) to Mary Harris.

On January 3, at Hall Green, Thomas C. Corbett (scholar 1922-26), to Betty Renton.

On February 16th, at Haselor, Edward Steele to Margaret Goulbourne (scholar 1927-30).

On February 19, at Salford Priors, Elwyn Roberts to Ellen Elizabeth Horne (scholar 1918-1921).

Nicknames.

From the earliest times, it seems, men's own names alone have not been good enough for them, or at least for their friends. Someone has had to make an addition, which at first took the place of a surname. So we read of Harold Harefoot, Siward the Bear, William the Conqueror and Longshanks, who sound infinitely more interesting than plain Henry I, Stephen and John. We do not find later so many monarchs and heroes of history with nicknames, but the habit has persisted among ordinary people. A recent investigation into this subject has yielded some interesting and not unamusing information. I discovered for instance, that very few girls have nicknames which stick. You find them occasionally called by names by which they have been known since their childhood, but often the name is soon forgotten, and more often still they have never had one at all. Thus Pip and Dobbie have been so-called as long as they and their families can remember, but most of their friends have no nicknames, or, like Grandma and Squeaker, have dropped them in favour of others or more often in favour of their proper Christian names. Then again, you find occasionally that members of the same family and especially brothers, like Cuddy and Snowball, have the same nickname.

Most nicknames can be divided into several wide classes. One of the largest of these is the class containing nicknames which are corruptions of proper names. Some, like Middy and Woody, are obvious derivations; others, like Joey and Maggy, are quite commonly found. But then there are some it would be more difficult to connect with the original, like Zuke, Stiffey, Eggy—alternatively known as Iggy—Sappy and Crumpets. Hank, too, is somewhat obscure, and who would think that Cabbage came originally from a surname?

Another large class of nicknames is that which is derived from the appearance or physical features of the individual. Ginger and Blondie denote the shade of their owners' hair, and Fuzzy-wig its quality; various small people are known as Pip, Toddler or Tiddler, and another not so small, as Tubby. I could find no very clear explanation as to why Dolly is so-called; various people murmured various things. I am still not quite sure whether it is because he looks like it or because he behaves like it. Perhaps one day the mystery will be solved. Then we have Naunipper "because he looks like a nipper"—but why the "Nau"? Nobody knows.

Closely allied to this class is the one in which nicknames derive from peculiarities of manner or unusual habits. Thus you may often see the Oddfellows and the Local Dignitary—occasionally known as the Viscount—engaged on a serious discussion while slowly parading the field, hands in pockets; or the Walking Encyclopaedia will answer any question you care to put to him, whether it be regarding the number of cabbages grown in one year in Great Britain or the climate of Formosa. Also included in this class are Bouncer, and Grandpa, because of his serious looks and elderly manner.

Then you find occasionally a few nicknames which cannot be classified. These are the result, perhaps, of events that have taken place in the past; Mickey is so-called, in a rather round-about way, because he once took the part of the Dormouse in "The Mad Hatter's Tea Party." They may, perhaps, be the result of a mistake, or a word misunderstood, as is Spikey; or they may be for obvious reasons that need no explanation, like America. But by far the largest class, strangely enough, is that containing nicknames for which there is no apparent explanation. These I have found the most interesting, but no amount of investigation has thrown any light on the origin of Buster, Tinny or Pippin. Gusser, Bessy and Sausage are equally inexplicable, and while several doubtful suggestions have been hazarded on the

subject of Lord Smoke of Chimney Alley, usually abbreviated to Smoke, this remains as mysterious and unusual as them all.

Finally, I have come across one or two "collective" nicknames which seem to have become rather popular lately. There have, in the past, been various sets of "Three Musketeers," but this common collective name has fallen out of fashion, to be replaced by more original ones. The Mad Scientists, for instance, relieve the monotony of everyday life by occasional minor explosions and other less dangerous experiments which take place in secluded corners when those in authority are looking the other way. The Vicarage is occasionally surprised in a solemn three-cornered debate on matters of great import. The Three Cornermen assemble everyday on Paradise Corner to follow that pursuit generally attributed to the other sex, a habit which has earned for them, from the said opposite sex, the additional pseudonym of Apple-women.

So, you see, nicknames are very much alive to-day, and new ones, like mushrooms, appear in the night. They certainly add greatly to one's character, for often they may be interesting sidelights on personality. And it would be very interesting to know why some people *never* have nicknames.

H. D. H.

The Scene I Note.

I love to sit upon my favourite seat,
Upon a cliff that looks o'er rolling waves
Upon whose bosom snowy breakers beat,
While underneath lie hidden many caves.

I love to watch the seagulls in their flight,
And see them land upon a nearby shore,
While in the bay a ship comes into sight,
Bound for home where friends will meet once more.

I love to see the sunset in the west,
When all the sky is clad in rich attire,
The angry sea, now calm, looks at its best,
Reflecting gorgeous hues from sky of fire.

I love to see the fishing smacks at night,
The welcome harbour lights at close of day,
The moon appears to shed her silver light,
To tell me that it's time to go my way.

CHRISTINE SANDERS, Upper IV.

Amicitia, Amor et Veritas.

It having been my great privilege of late to be enlisted, quite unwittingly it is true, in the Not-so-Dependent Order of Odd-fellows, I have been forced to consider most carefully the position in which I have been placed, and to take upon myself, most irresponsibly, the duties of an honourable member. But to clear the ground and to throw dust in your eyes, as it were, to conquer any misunderstanding and to satisfy all concerned, let me explain how my initiation into the order took place.

The cloakroom at school for a hundred boys is, to say the least, limited; and while changing, apart from finding the most queer things happening, such as the next boy's arm appearing down the sleeve of your shirt, or the fellow on the left tying knots in your laces, a most disconcerting proceeding—apart from these insignificant inconveniences there is a growing tendency to appropriate another's article to oneself, or, for the sake of the uninitiated, to do a bit of *borrowing*. It has been more often than on one occasion my great displeasure to experience the effects of this system of exchange—usually a one-sided transaction, it is true—and I found myself lately, before one football match(?) without one sock. I was forced to take the most unprecedented step of borrowing one, (without the italics this time please, Mr. Printer), and since beggars cannot be choosers I took the field in odd hosiery. Note:—‘took the field’ is a technical, not a literal expression. Now this occurrence was of so remarkable a nature, the stir created was so profound, that there and then I was enrolled a member of that memorable, auspicious house, the Oddfellows. And from that day to this my socks have not let the society down.

But the ease with which my enrolment took place has led me to consider the possibilities of forming similar institutions. I am very dissatisfied with the existing order of things, and when I consider how many anomalies are allowed to exist I fail to see why we should not invent some more. I cannot think why this possibility has struck no one before, for that matter I cannot think why it hit me so hard, but of course there are many cranks in the world and the Midlands are pretty full of them. So let us begin. Why the Most Honourable Order of the Bath? let us enquire; surely such a society is not sufficiently inclusive. Some of us, I am certain, even in this enlightened age, are more familiar with the inside of a tin-tub or of the kitchen-sink. We have a Sinking Fund in England, so why not a Sinking Order? Scholars no doubt will see in this a dark and covert reference to that class of individuals, now rapidly becoming extinct, viz:

(namely, for the benefit of the lesser brethren) the Swots. Or someone may suggest that these same academic oddities should be enlisted in a club or organisation of their own. Did someone say the Young Contemptibles? In truth a witty suggestion. And what should their badge be? I suggest *Poma oculorum magisterorum*. (No alterations please, Mr. Editor; I know the last word is wrong, but the rhythm is better; and also those who know better are allowed to make mistakes). Now we have decided on their title, viz: (see above), the Most Uncommon and Unpopular Order of Young Contemptibles, and also their badge, we have to select a suitable headquarters and meeting place for them. Did Smith Minimus suggest the middle of the Sahara? Again a very witty suggestion and one which evinces an exceptionally sound knowledge of that most difficult VA subject, Geography.

Having disposed of that illuminating subject, and incidentally of a lot of valuable magazine space, I will proceed to dispose of some more.

* * * *

I'm sorry, readers, but the Editor states that such nonsense as this has never been before, is not nor never will be again, written and included in the magazine and informs me that I had better prolong your agony no further but draw my inarticulate article to a fitful conclusion (poets and grammarians please note.)

P.S.—For all it may concern, and for everyone who is not interested the Latin heading of this piece is the motto of my adopted society; it is of course untranslatable.

P.P.S.—I was a dishonourable member of the Young Contemptibles for many an unforgettable year. L.P.

Notes and News.

The prefects this term are: (*Senior*)—D. Hunt, E. Hawkins, P. Horseman, G. Stone, Parsons, Baylis, Lewis, Shrimpton; (*Junior*)—D. Gale, I. Ison, A. Jenkins, Huxley, Spencer i.

The Sides captains are:—*Brownies*, D. Hunt and Whitehouse; *Jackals*, P. Horseman and Parsons; *Tomtits*, D. Gale and Baylis.

On Friday, December 10, a most entertaining recital of prose and poetry was given by Miss Mary Willetts.

On Thursday, December 16, there were two Carol concerts, one in the morning for the seniors, the other in the afternoon for the juniors.

At the beginning of term, new stoves appeared in the classrooms of Forms Lower IVb and III. So far, thanks to the comparatively mild weather, there has been very little need to make use of them.

The claims of homeless children were brought before the school by Miss Humphries, Warden for Warwickshire of Dr. Barnado's Institutions, on Thursday, January 27. After the lecture, D. Hunt, the head girl, presented a cheque for £2 11s. for the cause, the result of a collection made in the school.

Two lectures have been given this term to the Sixth and the Upper Fifth by Miss Rattey. On Thursday, February 3rd, the subject was "The Bible and its history"; while on Thursday, February 24th, the subject was "Archaeology and its value to-day." Members of the Lower Fifth also attended the latter lecture.

A party from Forms VI and Upper V with Miss Evans and Mr. Cook visited the works of the Austin Motor Company at Longbridge on Monday, February 28.

An Upper Fifth party, with Miss Evans and Mr. Walker, paid a visit on Thursday, March 10, to the works of Messrs. Cadbury, at Bournville.

Owing to boys leaving, there have been three captains of football in succession this term, Gray, Shrimpton and Baylis.

The honours boards on the far wall of the hall have now been filled, and new ones are being put in position at the opposite end.

Half term was Monday, February 21.

On Tuesday, March 8, demonstrations of the working of a Gas Plant were given in the Physics laboratory to Forms VI, Upper V, Lower V and Upper IV, by arrangement with the City of Birmingham Gas Department and the Alcester Gas Company.

Term ends on Tuesday, April 5.

The cross country races were run on Wednesday, March 9. The senior event was won by Whitehouse, the junior by Booker.

The Northern Lights.

The light was fading in the western sky,
A star winked here and there above my head,
Beyond the hills a red glow caught my eye,
While on the earth a rosy light was shed.
Then suddenly it changed its crimson hue
To flaming orange ; billowing misty light
Floated across it, merging into the blue,
Giving an air of mystery to the night.
The ruddy light became like angry scars,
Streaked with beams of pearly blue and green
Which came and went, searching among the stars,
Piercing the inky depths that lay between.
I gazed in wonder while the rays were drawn
From all sides upwards forming thus a bower ;
It changed, and yet again ; till pending morn
Dispelled the magic splendour of the hour.

D. A. SAVAGE, (Upper IV).

On having to Make a Speech.

I went one day to a lecture on first aid. I expected to enjoy myself as the subject was particularly interesting to me. But, alas ! when I reached the door I was met by a deputation who begged me to propose a vote of thanks to the speaker, as there was no one else able to do so. After a few protestations I had to submit to my fate.

Throughout that lecture, which was no doubt very interesting, my brain refused to act. In vain did I try to restore it by listening to what was said : I was unable to comprehend anything. This enabled me to realise how perturbed I was and I became more agitated than before. In vain did I try to think of something to say in my speech ; I could think of nothing which was sensible, and all I could comprehend was the fact that I was shivering very much and might be disturbing my neighbour. I watched the speaker bandage people and put splints on them without realising what she was doing. My brain seemed to have a vocabulary limited to the three words " Make a speech."

At last I realised dimly that the lecture was over and I shook worse than I had previously done. I realised that I had promised to propose a vote of thanks to a lecturer ; that I had no knowledge of what that lecture had been about ; that I had not prepared a speech and that I was feeling very unhappy, incapable of forming a single sentence. I managed to rise from my chair, and with a great effort commenced to speak, or rather to stutter, saying that I thought that we had all enjoyed the lecture very much, would go home feeling able to tackle cases better in

the future than we had in the past, would consequently have greatly benefited from her interesting lecture, and all hoped that she would come again later on. Having jerked this out in sentences I sat down hoping that, if she did return, I should not be the one to thank her on that occasion.

Everyone congratulated me on my excellent speech; but I am inclined to believe that if they also had not been thinking of the future and the likelihood of my making a fool of myself on another occasion, they would have been a little less kind and a little more frank. I returned home feeling that never again would I risk perjuring and shaming myself by making a speech.

R. STONE.

Olla Podrida.

The people of South-west England, states R.M., are not like us; they are hard-working people.

Novissima cauda, says M.W.B., means "his newborn tail."

Does the flowing rhythm and delicate cadence of the French language always lull the strong but weary A.C.B. to sleep?

Lakes, we learn, are found in volcanoes which are doormat.

Request by M.B. :—Please, sir, Mr. B— wants some chalk for singing.

Si vous venez hier je vous le donnerai, says P.R. So someone has at last made time stand still.

What happened to the precious bulb belonging to H.B.'s bicycle lamp?

Tea, writes S.S., is grown in the same climate as rice, only it is cultivated on the slops.

The strange requirements of rice are also mentioned by another pupil, who informs us that "rice requires a dry climate with abundant rainfall."

Rivos prope silvas means "streams nearly woods," states D.H.

That the Romans could add the art of conjuring to their long list of achievements is suggested by R.H.A. who translates *Caesari nuntiaverunt pulverem maiorem* as "they sent a message to Caesar in a cloud of dust."

Reminiscences.

How many years ago it seems since that bright spring morning when with some trepidation I first made my way along the bleak stone corridor in search of Form i. Once inside the green panelled door I felt more at ease and even the sight of fifteen little heads all turned towards the newcomer only alarmed me momentarily. The sun's beams danced on the scales of the two goldfish in the glass tank who flippantly blew bubbles up to the surface, only too pleased to be back in the form room after the holidays. A pink hyacinth was in bud on the window-sill. So school life began and before long I was initiated into the society of Form i.

(*Extracts from diaries kept each year*).—In Form ii—we write in ink and have desks of our own. A master teaches us Arithmetic. We draw circles and make patterns, then crayon them—that is called Geometry—I like Geometry. Every Monday we are allowed to go to the big library. We are having examinations at the end of the term; I do not know that I shall like that.

Form iii.—There are many new boys and girls in our form, and they all seem very clever. I have made friends with a little girl with long curls; one of the boys said he thought my hair would be ginger when I grew up—I do not like him at all—I told him so. We each have to stand up and say part of a Geometry theorem: I don't like Geometry so much. We learn Latin, French, Chemistry and Physics. I hate Physics; I cannot understand why we should imagine we are swimming face downwards in a current, I prefer to swim in the sea, face upwards.

In Form iv I played hockey for the Jackals. We all displayed much blue and white ribbon, but I did not score a goal as I fully intended. We were allowed to attend a meeting of the Debating Society as a great privilege. What important people we are! I was amazed at the amount of sugar that was consumed at tea-time by the male section of the community. The sixth form use big words. I wonder if they really understand them. Politics are rather too deep for me; I cannot understand why some people can form such extreme opinions and preference for a certain type of government. Perhaps if they had to live in a country where this rule is practised they wouldn't be quite so enthusiastic! England suits me very well.

We are now in Lower V. Days of freedom seem to be over, responsibilities are heaped upon us. The very precincts of our class-room necessitate more order than has hitherto been exercised.



WINTER

R. Stone

In Va we now think only of the future ; the present-day is a happy one, but clouds loom on the horizon. Will the world come to an end on the first of September as the people fly from the wrath of Oxford shouting Geometry ! Failure ! Eternal doom ! It remains to be seen. But whatever the result is, the goldfishes' descendants who still reside in Form i will blow bubbles with a flippant air and next spring on the window-sill, a pink hyacinth will be in bloom.

E. S.

Gossip.

That "a still tongue means a wise head" is a saying known to everyone but unfortunately only remembered by a few. Recently I was reading an article on punishment in bygone days, and among the instruments of torture used then, was a very gruesome looking metal frame called "The Gossip's Bridle," which enclosed the head and held the tongue with a gag. What a mercy that these kinds of punishment are now extinct, for according to the picture of "The Gossip's Bridle" it would be a far less becoming head-dress than a present-day "halo" or "Beret" and I am sure it would not be so comfortable to wear.

Why do people spend so much of their time gossiping ? By people I do not mean only women, although they have always had the name for favouring this way of passing the time, but also men as well. Of course the ladies have to talk while they knit or take a cup of tea with a friend, and I am certain that the lady who can relate the largest share of the village news is really the one who is most popular. What a thrill they seem to get if they can be the very first to tell someone else that "Mr. J— has had an accident with his car" or "Mrs. S—'s husband has been seen talking to another lady after dark"—quite harmless bits of news the first time they are told, but trouble is caused because by the time they have been handed on about a dozen times, the unfortunate Mr. J— has probably died from his accident and the equally unfortunate Mrs. S— has packed her trunks and left home. The small tales the gossiping lady loves to relate generally gather moss as they travel from one person to another and it is very astonishing how quickly they travel, at any rate in a small village where everyone is acquainted. Some women are almost as good as detectives in their eager search for anything fresh to gossip about—just let the St. John's Ambulance go by or even a police car and then is the time when housework and cooking are put on one side till they have found out who is ill or who is wanted by the police.

Naturally these are not the kind of subjects that members of the opposite sex like to discuss. They have their football pools and maybe a little mild flutter on a horse to discuss with their fellow men. Just let their football team be victorious, or let them get a little win on a football pool, and then where are they when they should be at home with the rest of the family? They stand at street corners or in the Milk Bar talking faster than any women. And don't these football-pool winnings grow too! Poor Mr. T— who perhaps has actually won about ten shillings finds himself, in a few days, surrounded by anxious creditors, who have heard that he had just won five hundred pounds and are feeling optimistic.

On the whole gossip does much harm and sometimes causes suffering, for people are bound to feel hurt if it comes to their ears that they are being talked about and they know that the tales which are being told about them have no truth in them. Perhaps in a few isolated cases gossip may do good—sometimes one hears through other people's chatter of someone who is in need of help and is too proud to ask for it.

Quite often very humorous situations come about from idle talk. There is a tale told of a small girl, who, on asking the gentleman how he had enjoyed his holidays at the seaside, was amazed when the gentleman replied that he had not been for any holidays. The child's amazement, however, was not nearly so great as that of her mother when her daughter said, "But you must have been to the seaside, because I heard my mother tell the lady next door that you were on the rocks."

J. P. Y.

A Sad Tale.

I once knew a dog, whose name was Yap ;
His mistress was tall and severe,
And when in the evening he sat on her lap
He would shed there many a tear.

He could not do as other dogs would,
His mistress had morals so strong ;
He had to stay in the house and be good
And romping of course was wrong.

Poor little Yap had such a bad time,
He got ill and lay down and died ;
The poor little dog was cut off in his prime
Because playtime to him was denied.

J. BRIDGMAN, Lower IVa.

these trifles I paid little heed at first, progressing at a pace which, for an amateur like myself, was quite satisfactory. However, my enthusiasm gradually diminished and I soon found that both my heels were blistered, while I was becoming increasingly uncomfortable. It was then that I realised that I must have taken a wrong turning. As the lane which I should be in ran parallel to the one along which I had been walking, I cut across a field and was half-way across a second when I realised to my great dismay that I was being chased by a bull. I managed to reach the gate before the bull and I tumbled rather than climbed over it and fell in a perspiring heap in the dusty lane. It now commenced to rain in torrents and I was soon soaked to the skin.

After several hours of walking, or rather hobbling, along in the rain and mud I eventually arrived in sight of the dear old home-stead, aching in every limb, footsore, soaked to the skin, spattered with mud and hungry enough to eat a horse, at four o'clock p.m.

Nevertheless, my hiking spirit is not entirely quenched and one day I shall again go hiking, but then I shall carry all the necessary equipment which enables a hiker to enjoy his ramble and I shall endeavour to select a route which will afford easier travelling.

I remain, Sir,

Yours sincerely,

X.N.O.Q. II.

Our Country-side.

Will you take a walk with me,
Down this country lane?
We can pick the sweetest flowers,
And make a daisy chain.
Such fun to gather buttercups,
And weave a golden crown;
We'll chase across the meadow green
And catch the thistledown.
There's purple clover hidden too,
Behind the old stone well.
Who takes a country walk with me
Will fall beneath the spell
Of sunlit trees, and bushes bright
With honeysuckle sweet;
Of pollen from a thousand blooms,
Like gold dust on our feet.
And at the end of a happy day,
When eyes to slumber yield,
The pillow will be sweet with scent
Of flowers from the field.

C. A. STANLEY, UPPER IV.

behold by the moon's silvery light, three old sheep, who had inexplicably become entangled in the guy-ropes. Perhaps it goes without saying that there was mutton for dinner the next day.

After the gate had been securely fastened, the tents were again pitched, this time at the price of a blow with a mallet on the swearing scout master's left foot. He hopped round invoking all his deities until his sound foot, which was shoeless, found a clump of thistles; whereupon he sat down in the still warm ashes of one of the fires, too full for words. When the tents were at last pitched, he crawled to his bed on hands and knees and crept beneath the cold sheets, shivering. Dawn broke the next day, and with it came the rain. It was not a mere shower, but torrents, a continued down-pour, which lasted the whole day, and delayed dinner until half-past three. The hungry scouts did not find cold mutton very palatable, and said so. The rain continued the next day and it was decided by unanimous vote that the camp should be struck, and a return to Tootle be instantly made. It is sufficient to say that the report at the annual meeting of the Local Association read: "The Annual Camp was not continued as long as was hoped owing to the inclemency of the weather and other causes." These causes are not enumerated. The report continues, "It cannot be truthfully said that the camp was altogether successful."

Scarcely.

Q. E. D.

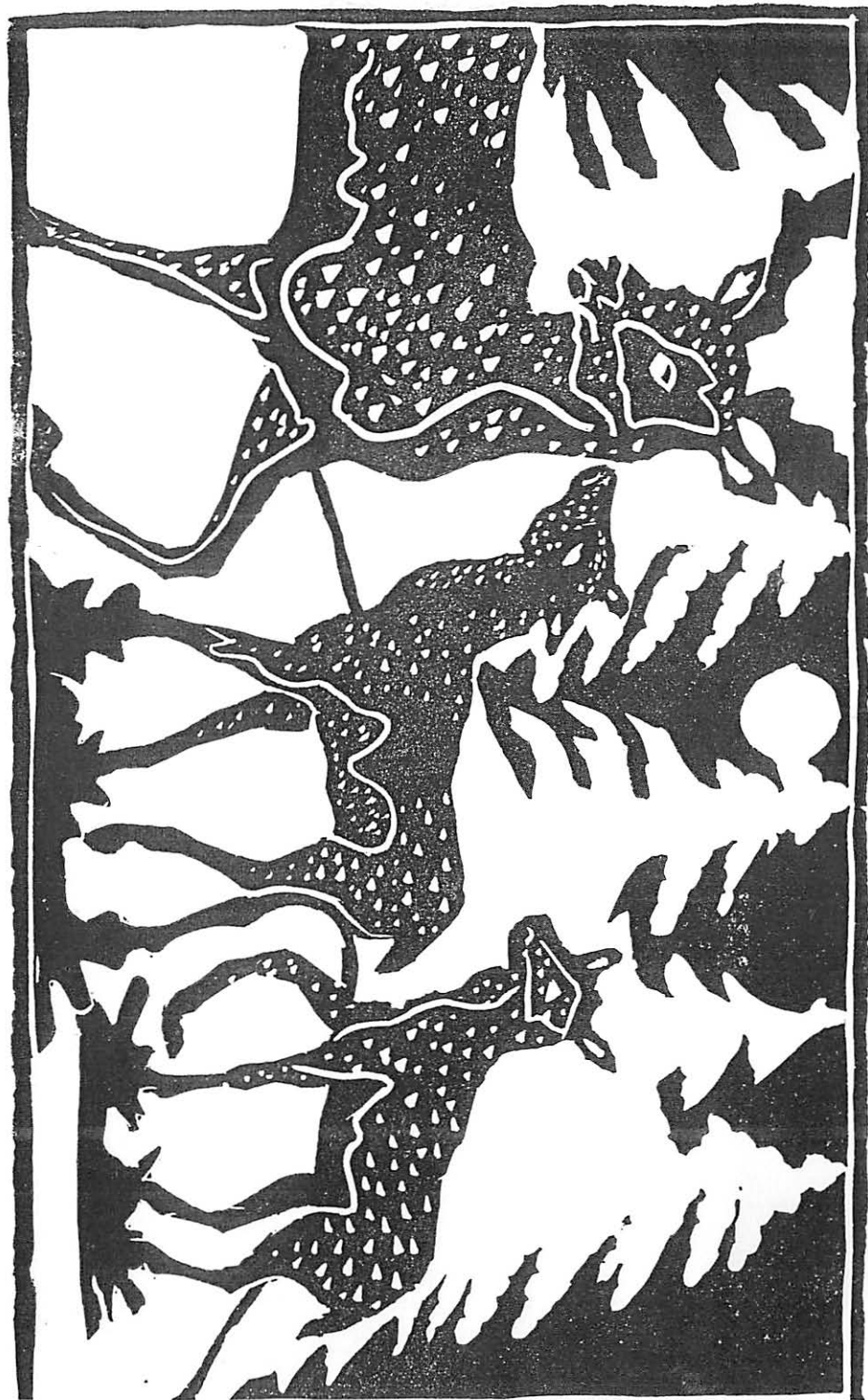
A Hike.

THE EDITOR, the A.G.S. RECORD.

Dear Sir,

Urged on by the National Keep Fit Campaign, and noticing the increasing number of hikers, I decided to become a hiker myself. Consequently, on the following Saturday I rose early, ate a hurried breakfast and, after procuring a substantial stick, I set off with the intention of making a circular tour of the countryside and getting back in time for dinner. I remembered having been taken by bicycle round the proposed route once by a friend several months previously and also that it took us about three hours. Little realising the difference between cycling speed and walking speed, I imagined that by setting out at seven-thirty a.m. I should return by one o'clock.

I walked down the main road, whistling and exultant in the morning sunshine, soon branching off down a lane which was rather the worse for wear. After half-an-hour my feet were aching and I was perspiring, although only lightly clad. To



A Local Celebrity.

When the spotted thrush had sung its first song to his mate, carefully hidden amidst fresh green leaves in a nearby tree, old Bill the village postman stepped from his quaint little cottage with its white-washed walls and windows decorated with red geraniums. He was a sturdy man of strong physique who had obviously benefited from a life spent in the healthy open air. On his face was a strong expression of determination to conquer all his foes. His strong wrinkled hands showed clearly that he was not afraid of real hard work.

On the threshold of his humble dwelling he paused for a second, clad in his uniform smartly brushed, buttons brightly polished and shoes diligently blacked ready to commence his daily task. With solid strides he walked to a nearby shed from which he wheeled an old, but well preserved bicycle. With a farewell nod to his smiling sister he set off on his morning round. Merrily turning the pedals of his ancient steed to the tune of an old folk song, he eventually arrived at the village post office. After a friendly greeting, he discussed with the post-mistress, a woman well past the prime of life, prospects of the weather and various trifles of village scandal. She then handed him a substantial pile of correspondence, the delivery of which would take hours of rough riding over muddy country lanes.

At the top of a steep hill amongst stately cedar trees stood the doctor's house where he made his first call, probably the most important. He was greeted by a friendly cook, who was in the act of stirring the porridge for breakfast. Whether her share of news made her stir the porridge more slowly than usual or whether her fat arm was invigorated with extra strength, old Bill did not stop to ascertain. He went next to the Blacksmith's house and having handed him an extra large packet, he was rewarded with a good hot cup of tea, during the consumption of which the contents of that package were praised or criticised as the case may be. Gathering up his now lighter post-bag, Bill started off again on a ride of at least two miles in order to take a miserable postcard to an even more disagreeable Mrs. Smith, in whose household trouble was always brewing. If her children were not suffering from measles, her dog had just died in a fit.

Up to the old windmill Bill would then wend his way; this was the home of a once prosperous but now nearly destitute miller, the father of two lonely daughters who were always anxious to receive communications from the outside world. Life up there was far from thrilling, out in the heart of such desolate country.

Mrs. Beck, a pleasant round faced farmer's wife, was always on her front doorstep amongst the ducks and hens ready to take her letters as soon as they arrived. She was only interested in the envelopes which bore foreign stamps, having scattered about the empire three sons of whom she was always eager to obtain news. There was also Mrs. Riggs, an old washerwoman, not far away. She was always eager to hear from her husband, a sailor on the high seas. Her life was far from rosy and many were her tales of woe. As might be expected the weather was her chief concern. If the wind was in the right direction for her washing, it was quite certain to be wrong for her poor Harry out at sea.

On the other hand for farmer Giles, down in the valley, the most fertile part of the village, life had quite a different aspect. He received his bills with a cheery smile ; his groom was saddling his favourite mare and he was looking forward to a good day's sport with the hounds. These are but a few of the many different characters that old Bill met on his round, but he had a smile and a cheerful word for them all.

His spare time was spent by no means in idleness. He cultivated his small garden plot with great care and skill. Being a useful man, his services were consequently in great demand and he was constantly at the beck and call of everybody around him. When their pigs, having reached a more than reasonable size, were ready to be killed, old Bill often officiated as slaughterer. At hairdressing he was an adept. Farm labourers, finding their wild hair to have grown to an alarming length, sought their friend's cottage, where with a large pair of scissors he would patiently shear the locks of each gallant comrade. So this local celebrity lived his life, his daily tasks being as diverse as the contents of the communications he delivered to his fellow-villagers day by day.

A. M. J.

Cases v. Satchels.

A very little investigation within the precincts of A.G.S. reveals that there is a kind of war going on at present. "To be or not to be" is not the question of the moment ; a glance in any empty classroom during school-time suggests that the most debatable point is whether one should carry one's homework to and from school in a satchel or in a case.

In practice, it would appear that attache-cases are more favoured by the girls, and satchels by the boys, although it has been noted that certain dignified male members of the school consider it beneath their dignity to use the means of conveyance of books

adopted by the common crowd, and thus we have the rather ludicrous spectacle of a very large boy carrying a very small case, and a very small boy carrying a very large case. Why they imagine that an attache-case adds to their dignity, while a satchel detracts from it, it is impossible to say. They probably have some deep and profound reason for this belief, which I quite expect would take them several hours to expound, and which is therefore hardly worth investigating.

This deviation from the general rule is also evident among the girls. Although a glance into the girls' cloakroom at "break" reveals that a very large majority of the feminine element in the School prefers a case to a satchel, yet one may occasionally see a girl making her way down the corridor with a manly stride and a satchel. Their reasons, too, are hard to find, and one can only assume that they prefer a satchel because they believe it will hold more than a case. And now one reaches the point upon which the whole debate of "Case v. Satchel" depends. Does a case hold more than a satchel, and if so, is it to the owner's advantage?

At the first examination, the last statement would appear to be true. In comparing an average-sized case and satchel side by side, an ordinary person would come to the conclusion that a case holds more books. Not so the schoolboy or girl. A great mistake is made in believing that books, (and sometimes dinners) are all that the school-boy carries in his satchel. Gloves, apples, stamps, sweets, papers, caps, and works of Art—this last done, I suspect, while chasing the elusive solution to that Geometry theorem set for homework—all these things are carried to and from school by the school boy or girl. Therefore is it to be wondered at, taking into consideration the different shapes of the articles mentioned above, that the wilder spirits of the School prefer satchels? Of course, the fact that they can take less homework home in their satchels than if they had cases, deters them not in the least. In fact they rejoice in it.

The relative merits of the case or satchel do not depend alone on its capacity for carrying things. When one is at school, many other merits or demerits of the receptacle in question must be taken into consideration. For example, a great disadvantage of the satchel is that it is liable to be kicked about the classroom by anyone keen on football, in a temper, or merely clumsy. It is soft, limp and highly responsive to a kick, whereas a case has hard corners, painful to the toe. But this disadvantage of the satchel is much outweighed by its usefulness as a weapon for defence or aggression. One merely has, in the words of the dance-band leaders, to "swing it." Now a case is much more likely to be jumped on and ruined by some excited member of

one's form, than to be of any use in self-defence. Some of the attache-cases to be seen give the impression that they had indeed been subject to this fate more than once before.

Again, the case, although with many advantages, is apt to be regarded as something more than a nuisance by the other members of one's form, and even by the unsuspecting teacher, walking the gangways, for whose unwary feet the attache-case lies in the passage. How often, in one day, are cases to blame for tripping up various people ! Owners, please note.

In observing this war of cases versus satchels, it is interesting to note what a great variety of satchels, in varying stages of antiquity, are brought to school. It seems that some are family heirlooms, handed down from generation to generation ; they have seen many a fight, felt many a kick, in their days ; they are true warriors, and the only satchels worthy of the name. Of course, there are people who bring satchels to school in all their bright brown newness, with the owner's name proudly engraved, in large letters, on the flap. But alas ! for all their glory, they too become battered, bruised, war-scarred and split, but still they retain their owner's affection ; indeed, the older a satchel the more companionable it is. A buckle has to be replaced here, a seam resewn there, and a strap mended somewhere else, but however old a satchel is, it will not desert you. No, it will serve you faithfully for many months yet, when handles and locks on attache-cases are past all repair. I think that it is due to this loyalty and longevity that I prefer a satchel.

P. R. H.

A Journey in the Coffee-pot.

Now this coffee-pot, my dear friends, was by no means an ordinary one. It had belonged to an old magician who was very fond of playing jokes on people. The pot had two compartments, the top one for the coffee and the bottom one for anyone to ride in. The person who wished to get inside the latter had only to say the magic word and, hey presto ! they were in. When you wanted to get out, you just wished yourself out.

The lady who owned the coffee-pot was quite unaware of its peculiar property, but my friend and I knew of it, and determined to take a journey round the tea-table. One afternoon, the lady was expecting some friends to tea, and we thought this would be a good day for our trip. We went to her house and managed to get inside the pot without being seen. At first we felt rather cold, but when the hot coffee was made we soon got warm again.

At length the guests arrived and the coffee-pot began its journey round the table. We could hear, quite clearly, the conversation of the people. One lady said to her friend, "*Dear Mr. so and so, have you heard about that dreadful woman next door*" and so on. Everytime the coffee was poured out, my friend and I had an awful time. We were tilted, jerked, and thrown against the sides of the pot. Round and round the table we went, still hearing scraps of conversation — "*and she actually had the temerity to suggest that I should help,*" etc.

My friend began to feel rather giddy and whispered that he wished we were back home. He had forgotten that when you wished yourself out of the pot, you came out. In two seconds he was on the table. Loud screams from the ladies — "*Oh !!!*" from the confused babel of voices I heard the news that "*dear Harriet has fainted. Get the smelling salts quickly !*" "*No wonder she fainted.*" "*That brute ! Oh, I shall never forget the look on his villainous face. Positively murderous, I call it !*"

I began to wonder where the 'brute' had disappeared to. Evidently he was not in the room. "*My giddy aunt,*" I exclaimed to myself, "*how I wish I was with him !*" I too had forgotten.

I came straight out of the coffee-pot on to the table. "*Another of them !*" shrieked someone at the top of her very high-pitched voice. "*Where are they all coming from ?*" I rushed to the door and ran home as fast as I could. As I expected I found my friend at home.

"How did you get away, Geoff?" I asked. "Well, Jack," he said, "I came out of the pot on to the table where I stood thunderstruck for a second. Everyone looked at me, speechless, and one very fat woman had hysterics. I believe she thought I was the devil in the guise of a man. Then I suddenly came to my senses and made a dive for the door and came home."

"Well," said I, with a grin, "I don't think I want any more rides in that pot." "I certainly don't" he said. I think I heard the magician laughing.

MARY AUSTIN, UPPER iv.

Examination Results.

ASSOCIATED BOARD OF THE ROYAL SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

In the examinations held in December last, the following candidates obtained certificates:-

Piano : Grade ii (Elementary), C. Sanders, R. Pellman, J. Bridgman.

*Grade iii (Transitional), * R. H. Arnold.*

Grade iv (Lower), C. Pellman, R. Yates, I. Ison.

*Violin : Grade ii, * D. Savage.*

* Honourable mention.

Debating Society.

CHAIRMAN—Miss Evans.

HON. SECRETARY—Butt.

COMMITTEE—

D. Hunt, R. Stone, Parsons, Hunt i, Whitehouse and Butt.

At the end of last term a debate was held at which the subject "Dictatorship is more efficient than Democracy"—was discussed with great enthusiasm, the result being a victory for the opposition by a majority of twenty-nine votes.

At a meeting held in the early part of this term, the committee resolved that there should be two debates : the first during the week preceding the half-term holiday, and the second to be held during the last week of the term.

On Friday, February 11, the subject—"Progress is a delusion"—was discussed. This proved to be one of the most keen and exciting debates that have ever taken place, the opposition proving victorious by a small majority of three votes.

It has been resolved that the subject—"Expediency and Efficiency are the guiding principles of Modern Life"—will be placed before the house, the date suggested being Thursday, March 31. We hope that as many as possible will attend.

M. W. B.

Postage Stamp Club.

SECRETARIES—Parsons and Woods.

The two sections of the club have met on alternate Tuesdays, the seniors at 4 p.m., the juniors at 1.30 p.m. The first part of each meeting has been devoted to the exchange of duplicates and most collections have benefited by the opportunity thus afforded. The rest of each of the juniors' meetings has been occupied with displays of stamps by Mr. Druller, with talks on the stamps shown. These meetings have been consistently well attended.

A more varied programme has been arranged for the senior section. Early in the term members took part in a competition of sheets of twenty-five stamps, to be judged on arrangement and mounting, condition, etc. One meeting was given up to a display of these entries, with critical remarks on them and advice upon points to be observed in submitting displays for competitions. The entries were on the whole praiseworthy, and the placings were :—1 D. Hunt and Parsons, 3 Davis.

Two meetings included as a main feature displays of British Colonial stamps, with particular attention to stamps of George VI. The meeting on March 15th gave members an opportunity of showing some of their own stamps. "War" was the main

topic, with special reference to stamps associated with the present wars in Spain and China.

Both sections of the club are bringing the term's activities to a close with further competitions, in connection with which considerable keenness is being shown. The results of these competitions will be given in our next report.

The magazines have circulated with fair regularity among the seniors, and it is hoped that they have furnished some useful and interesting information to all.

At the end of term the club suspends its meetings for this school year, but hopes to resume them at the beginning of the autumn term. Business in the exchange of duplicates should then be very brisk once again.

Scouts.

SCOUTMASTER—Mr. Walker.

There has been a radical alteration in the arrangement of patrols and of personnel this term. The change has been necessitated by the discovery that the old system of seven patrols was impracticable and by the fact that each one of the seventy scouts is at a different stage in the many activities of scouting. Three new patrols have been created, and to obviate any inequalities in points that may have arisen from the changeover the three new patrols have been started with the average number of points gained up-to-date. Parsons has been elected Troop Leader, which is a new office in the School troop.

Another new idea is being tried this term. It is what is termed the Court of Honour. The patrol leaders have met each week under the chairmanship of the Troop leader to decide what was to be done each Friday. They have discovered quite soon that the task of supplying seventy scouts with occupations is no easy task.

Mr. Walker is devoting his attention to the more arduous side of scouting, preparing the scouts for tests and passing them through. The co-operation of every patrol leader and corporal is now essential for the smooth running of the troop, and Mr. Walker feels that they should be given opportunities to develop qualities otherwise neglected in school life.

L. P.

Netball.

Netball is now played regularly throughout the school as a supplement to hockey. An inter-form tournament has been arranged for the end of the term, and it is hoped that a party of Senior girls will visit the Midland Netball Rally at Bournville on March 26th.

Football.

CAPTAIN—Baylis.

There was a decided improvement in the standard of play at the end of last term, and two decisive victories were obtained. A new fixture with the Alcester C.L.B. found the School forwards in scoring mood. Unfortunately the Captain and Vice-Captain left school, and it was soon evident that they would not easily be replaced, as in the first match this term we were only able to draw with the C.L.B.

The defence is still quite steady, but numerous experiments have been made with the forward line. The forwards' lack of size is a great handicap when playing against the bigger teams in the district.

RESULTS :

- A.G.S. v. Old Scholars (home), won 4—2.
v. Alcester C.L.B. (home), won 9—0.
v. Alcester C.L.B. (home), drawn 3—3.
v. Old Scholars (home), lost 4—9.
v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (away), lost 1—8.
v. King's Norton S.S. (away), lost 1—14.
v. Redditch C.H.S. (home), lost 2—3.
v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (home), lost 0—6.
v. Redditch C.H.S. (away), lost 2—6.
(Under 14 XI).
v. C.E. School (home), won 7—0.

SIDES MATCHES. Tomtits 5 v. Brownies 4 ; Jackals 5 v. Brownies 5 ;
Jackals 1 v. Tomtits 1.

Hockey.

CAPTAIN—D. Hunt.

VICE-CAPTAIN—I. Ison.

The 1st XI have played three matches so far this term. Although they were defeated in two of them, the draw with the Old Scholars is encouraging, and on the whole the team shows a great improvement on last term's play. It is hoped that weaknesses in the forward line will have been remedied and a higher standard reached by the end of the season.

A Junior team drawn from Forms Low IVb and III have played two keenly contested matches with Alcester C. of E. School, of which the first was a draw and the second a win for A.G.S.

- RESULTS: A.G.S. v. Redditch C.H.S. (home), lost 2—11.
v. Old Scholars (home), drawn 0—0.
v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (home), lost 0—8.
A.G.S. Junior XI. v. Alcester C. of E. School (home), drawn 0—0
v. Alcester C. of E. School (home), won 3—0

Sides Matches :

Autumn Term—Brownies 3, Tomtits 0.

Spring Term—Jackals 1, Tomtits 0 ; Jackals 3, Brownies 1, Brownies 5,
Tomtits 0. H. D. H.

Musical Society.

PRESIDENT—Miss Deans.

CHAIRMAN—Mr. Caton.

The long-awaited meeting at which the school members will perform before their fellows will take place on March 30th. Mr. Bates is arranging the programme and it is hoped to comprise piano duets and solos, violin solos and songs. As this kind of programme has not lately been attempted we hope to make it a success in order to have more frequent repetitions in the future.

L. P.

For The Juniors.

The Haunted Tree.

"I am sure that this house is haunted," said Mrs. Squirrel, "Only last night," said Baby Squirrel, "I heard a tapping on the tree trunk." "Well," said Father Squirrel, "last night I heard a swishing on the branches." "It's all very funny," said the Baby, twitching his nose.

Now there also lived a family of Woodpeckers in the trunk of the tree, and they were talking like this at breakfast. "I think our tree must be haunted," said Mother Woodpecker. "Yes," said the Baby. "I quite agree with you," said Father Woodpecker.

Now, as well as these two families there were some snakes living in that tree and they all said the same thing. Really, it was each of the creatures talking and moving about, that made their home seem to be haunted.

But one day some food was left on the ground, and all the animals rushed down and met at once at the foot of the tree—then they all found out why their tree was "haunted."

STELLA HARRISON, Form II.

A Night Alarm.

Mr. Noah, Mrs. Noah, Tiddie, the golliwog, Liddie, the drummer boy, Jackie, the sailor, Lickie, the clown, and Sheila, the doll, were all together in a big box in the nursery. One night when all the children were in bed and fast asleep, there came a great bang from downstairs. Everybody got up and called out "Burglars!" and ran downstairs.

From the landing the children saw the big clock in the hall tipped over. Underneath it they found the golliwog lying flat. They picked him up and found he was not hurt, nor any of the other toys that had got out of the nursery. They were all safely returned and lived happily ever after.

MARY ROWLAND, Form I.

ALCESTER :
THE CHRONICLE OFFICE,
HIGH STREET.
